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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

Memorandum



THE SITUATION IN VIETNAM

Information as of 0600
6 March 1965

PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Office of Current Intelligence
6 March 1965

INTELLIGENCE MEMORANDUM

The Situation in Vietnam as of 0600 EST

Communist Military Developments

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3. Initial photo interpretation of the 2 March strike on Quang Khe--the South Vietnamese target--has confirmed extensive damage to the target area. Six buildings were destroyed and 10 were heavily damaged.

Communist Political Developments

4. A 5 March Chinese Communist broadcast has charged that Soviet police and troops brutally suppressed the student demonstration against the US Embassy in Moscow on 4 March. Peiping called the action of Soviet authorities "an outrage," and claimed the students, mostly Asian and African, were filled with "indignation and anger" at the methods used by the Soviet police.

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[Redacted]

[Redacted]

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6. The USSR continues its efforts to underscore the seriousness of the current Vietnam crisis and the wider ramifications for Soviet-US relations unless the US changes its policy.

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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8. Following along the lines of the 4 March Soviet Government statement--which attacked the US for "open aggression" against the DRV--a 5 March Red Star editorial was unusually bitter in asserting that US actions recall the time when "Nazi gangsters behaved just as cynically and traitorously."

Political Activity in South Vietnam

[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

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12. An official spokesman of the Buddhist Institute told a US Embassy officer on 5 March that the Institute leadership had decided to ask Thich Quang Lien to drop his "peace project." The decision stemmed from the leadership's feeling that the project could too easily be misinterpreted and exploited by the Communists, and could lead to misunderstanding of Buddhist intentions both within South Vietnam and abroad. The Buddhist spokesman also noted that the leadership generally approved the strikes against North Vietnam as necessary blows at enemy base areas.

Viet Cong Military Activity

13. Viet Cong activity continues at a fairly high rate, with widespread harassment of land communications and district towns. Unconfirmed press reports note that the Viet Cong on 3 March overran a town near Binh Gia in Phuoc Tuy Province southeast of Saigon and that casualties among a 125-man Regional Force company guarding the town were 16 dead, 22 wounded, and "many" missing. On 3 March, elements of two South Vietnamese airborne battalions and a Ranger battalion were airlifted into the area.

14. Heavy fighting apparently continues in Quang Tin Province in an area about 40 miles southwest of Da Nang. Government forces have engaged an estimated

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[REDACTED]

two Viet Cong battalions. Initial press reports indicate that the commander of the South Vietnamese First Regiment is missing and may have been captured.

15. The presence of substantial Viet Cong forces in Phuoc Tuy Province, despite several recent bombing attacks by US jets [REDACTED]

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